

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-14 EA-12 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00  
AGRE-00 FEA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 ERDA-07  
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 INR-07 L-03 NSF-02  
NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-05 USIA-15 OES-07 SS-15 SP-02  
INT-05 OIC-02 /167 W  
-----049531 101916Z/40

R 101345Z SEP 77  
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1264  
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USMISSION GENEVA  
USEC BRUSSELS 0244

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 NAIROBI 11767/1

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS

E. O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SENV, OCON, UN  
SUBJ: UN DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE -- WRAP-UP AND OVERVIEW

SUMMARY - UN DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE (UNCOD) CONCLUDED  
9:00 P.M. FRIDAY AFTER APPROVING: GLOBAL PLAN OF ACTION  
DESIGNED TO CURB DESERTIFICATION BY YEAR 2000; INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL MACHINERY TO ENSURE PROMPT AND  
EFFECTIVE FOLLOW-UP; AND SERIES OF SEPARATE RESOLUTIONS  
OF LARGELY A POLITICAL NATURE. ATMOSPHERE OF COOPERATION,  
CONCILIATION AND CONSENSUS WHICH CHARACTERIZED MEETING  
SOMEWHAT MARRED ON FINAL DAY BY FAILURE TO AGREE ON  
NECESSARY FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS. OVERALL, UNCOD, MUCH  
IN PATTERN OF WATER CONFERENCE, WITH POLITICAL ISSUES  
PRESENT AND HIGHLY VISIBLE, YET NOT OBSTRUCTING OR UNDULY  
DETRACTING FROM THE MAJOR WORK OF THE MEETING.

1. UNCOD, HELD 29-AUG-98, NAIROBI. ATTRACTED 700  
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OFFICIAL DELEGATES FROM 95 COUNTRIES, 4 LIBERATION COUNCILS,  
32 UN AND INTERNATIONAL BODIES AND 44 NON-GOVERNMENTAL  
ORGANIZATIONS. AS MANDATED BY ENABLNG UNGA RESOLUTION  
(3337-XXIX OF 17 DEC. 74), CONFERENCE: (A) APPROVED WORLD  
MAPHOF AREAS Affected BY AND VULNERABLE TO DESERTIFICATION;  
(B) ASSESSED AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON DESERTIFICATION  
CAUSES AND EFFECTS; AND (C) ENDORSED "COMPREHENSIVE AND

COORDINATED ACTION PROGRAMME AGAINST DESERTIFICATION,  
INCLUDING BUILDING UP OF INDIGENOUS AND AUTONOMOUS  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY."

2. WORLD MAP: UNCOD APPROVED FAO/UNESCO/UNEP-PREPARED  
MAP "AS FIRST APPROXIMATION", REFLECTING NUMEROUS  
COMPLAINTS ABOUT POLITICAL AND DESERTIFICATION BOUNDARIES.  
CHINESE AND BRAZILIANS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL, WITH LATTER  
SEEKING WHEREVER POSSIBLE TO EXPRESS VIEW THAT BRAZIL  
NOT CURRENTLY Affected BY "DESERTIFICATION".

3. CAUSES AND EFFECTS: DEBATE REVEALED BROAD  
AGREEMENT THAT CLIMATE, WHILE IMPORTANT LONG-TERM FACTOR,  
IS SUB-CORDINATE TO MAN AS PRINCIPAL CAUSE OF DESERTIFI-  
CATION. ALSO, THAT EXISTING KNOWLEDGE AND INSTITUTIONS  
SUFFICIENT TO MAKE SIGNIFICANT INROAD IN DESERTIFI-  
CATION PROCESS. SURPRISING ABSENCE OF DISCUSSION OF  
OFTEN CAPTIVATING, EXOTIC SOLUTIONS (E.G., WEATHER  
MODIFICATION, ICEBERG TOWING, DESALINATION, SOLAR  
ENERGY). ONLY CONTROVERSY INVOLVED SCOPE OF "DESERTIFI-  
CATION", WITH ETHIOPIA, AUSTRIA AND ZAIRE SEEKING,  
WITHOUT MUCH SCUSS, TO BRING IN WOODED UPLANDS AND  
HUMID TROPICS. EMPHASIS REMAINED ON PROBLEMS OF OVER-  
GRAZING, POOR AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES, MISMANAGEMENT  
OF WATER RESOURCES, AND (TO LESS DEGREE) ON POPULATION  
GROWTH AND MOVEMENT IN WORLD'S DRYLANDS AND DESERT  
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REGIONS.

4. PLAN OF ACTION: CONFERENCE APPROVED 90-PAGE ACTION  
PLAN, CONTAINING 26 PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS PLUS  
SERIES OF IMMEDIATE ACTIONS, DESIGNED TO (ACCORDING  
TO UNCOD SEC-GEN TOLBA) "ACHIEVE ZERO DESERTIFICATION  
GROWTH BY YEAR 2000". PLAN QUITE SIMILAR TO DRAFT  
INTRODUCED TO CONFERENCE, EXCEPT FOR NEW SECTIONS ON  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS (CALLED FOR BY MEXICO); INDUS-  
TRIALIZATION AND URBANIZATION (USSR); PUBLIC PARTICIPA-  
TION (SWEDEN); ROLE OF WOMEN (NORWAY); INTEGRATED PHYSICAL  
PLANNING (ITALY); NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS  
(NETHERLANDS); LAND-WILDLIFE CONSERVATION INCLUDING  
OFF-ROAD VEHICLE REGULATION (URUGUAY); AND CLIMATE (US).  
USDEL PLAYED MAJOR ROLE IN REVISING INITIALLY CONTENTIOUS  
LANGUAGE IN FIRST TWO OF THESE, AND ENDED UP AS CO-  
SPONSORS. MAJOR POINTS OF CONTROVERSY INVOLVED SHARED  
RIVER BASINS, WITH BANGLADESH INSISTENCE ON GOING  
BEYOND WATER CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS CONSUMING  
INORDINATE AMOUNT OF TIME. ACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE  
WORKED OUT WITH INDIA AND BRAZIL, WITH LATTER HOWEVER  
STAKING OUT POSITION THAT SINCE IT ISN'T AFFECTED

BY DESERTIFICATION, IT CAN'T BE BOUND BY LANGUAGE WHICH IS CLEARLY APPLICABLE TO SITUATIONS IN WHICH SHARED WATER PROBLEMS OCCUR IN DESERTIFIED AREAS. SECOND ISSUE INVOLVED FUTURE OF NOMADIC PEOPLES WITH US TAKING LEAD IN OPPOSING SOMALI'S VIEW THAT SEDENTARIZATION (A NATIONAL POLICY FOR SOMALIA) IS A PRINCIPAL WEAPON IN FIGHT AGAINST DESERTIFICATION. MODIFIED LANGUAGE IN PLAN, AND ACCOMPANYING CONFERENCE REPORT, MAKES CLUEAR US VIEW (SHARED BY INTER ALIA FRANCE, UK, SWEDEN, NETHERLAND) THAT CAREFUL STUDIES OF PROS AND CONS MUST BE BASIS FOR NOMAD POLICIES, AND THAT NOMADISM MAY BE BEST USE OF LAND. OVERALL, CONFERENCE WAS IN GENERAL AGREEMENT ON PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF PLAN. DEBATE INVOLVED RELATIVELY MINOR AMENDMENTS

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WITH VERY FEW DIFFERENCES IN VIEWS ON SUBSTANTIAL MATTERS. IN LINE WITH U.S. PREFERENCE, UNCOD AGREED TO LEAVE DECISION ON VARIETY OF NEW REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS PROPOSED IN DRAFT PLAN TO POST-FONFERENCE REGIONAL MEETINGS WHICH WILL BE HELD.

5. INSTITUTIONAL/FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: THESE CONSTITUTE MAJOR ELEMENTS OF PLAN OF ACTION AND WERE ADDRESSED BY INTER-REGIONAL WORKING GROUP ESTABLISHED BY UNCOD COMMITTEE OF WHOLE. QUICK AGREEMENT REACHED ON ASSIGNING UNEP RESPONSIBILITY (I.E. "VERY SMALL" COORDINATION UNIT IN UNEP, GOVERNING COUNCIL TO PROVIDE GOVERNMENTAL OVERVIEW, AND ECB HAVING INTERAGENCY COORDINATION ROLE). BROAD CONSENSUS FOR STRENGTHENING ROLE OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS LED TO LANGUAGE WHICH WOULD VEST THEM WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR "EXECUTING INTRAREGIONAL PROGRAMS." U.S. OBJECTED TO THIS AND FOOTNOTE ADDED TO LIMIT MANBATE. FINANCIAL ARRANGMENETS PROVED VERY DIFFICULT, FORCING VOTES ON THREE ISSUES. FINAL ACTION CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ESTABLISHMENT OF PERMANENT CONSULTATIVE GROUP OF MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL ASSISTANCE AGENCIES PLUS DEVELOPING COUNTRY REPS.; CREATION BY UNGA OF A "SPECIAL ACCOUNT" FOR THE FINANCING OF DESERTIFICATION PROGRAMS; AND A STUDY OF POSSIBLE OTHER MEASURES (E.G., FUNDS IN TRUST; INTERNATIONAL TAXATION SCHEMES). US-SPONSORED PROPOSAL FOR INTERIM CONSULTATIVE GROUP TO ANALYZE AND RECOMMEND PERMANENT FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT WAS VOTED DOWN. LIKELIHOOD OF FAVORABLE ACTION ON US PROPOSAL VIRTUALLY NIL GIVEN UNCOD SEC-GEN'S HEAVY LOBBYING WITH LDCS FOR SOMETHING "MORE THAN ANOTHER STUDY BY EXPERRT GROUP".

6. POLITICAL ASPECTS: (COVERED IN EARLIER CABLES).

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PRINCIPALLY INVOLVED FOLLOWING: SHARED RIVER BASINS

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 ARA-14 EA-12 NEA-10  
AGRE-00 AID-05 CEQ-01 CIAE-00 ERDA-07 COME-00  
DODE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 INR-07 L-03 NSF-02 NSC-05  
NSAE-00 PM-05 USIA-15 OES-07 SS-15 SP-02 INT-05  
FEA-01 OIC-02 /167 W  
-----050236 102349Z /72

R 101345Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1265  
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USMISSION GENEVA  
USEC BRUSSELS 0245

UNCLAS FINAL SECTION 2 OF 2 NAIROBI 11767/2

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(BANGLADESH AMENDMENTS TO ACTION PLAN); CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS OF WAR (CAPE VERDE RESOLUTION); FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (AFGHANISTAN, AND OTHERS, RESOLUTION); CONDEMNATION OF ISRAELI NEGEV STUDY (SYRIA, AND OTHERS, RESOLUTION); NAMIBIA (UN COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA), AND BANTUSTAN CONDEMNATION (CAPE VERDE RESOLUTION). ALL RESOLUTIONS WERE ADOPTED BY CONSENSUS WITH EXCEPTION OF ISRAELI-NEGEV ISSUE WHICH REQUIRED VOTE (WITH U.S. IN OPPOSITION). ANOTHER MORE RELEVANT RESOLUTION BY SENEGAL CALLING FOR INCREASED ASSISTANCE TO DROUGHT-STRIKEN SAHEL COUNTRIES APPROVED BY CONSENSUS. ALTHOUGH THESE ITEMS WERE TIME-CONSUMING DISTRACTIONS, THEY WERE HANDLED RELATIVELY EFFICIENTLY AND DID NOT SPARK FIREWORKS AND BITTERNESS.

7. U.S. ROLE: USDEL PROMINENT BY VIRTURE OF SIZE AND

PARTICIPATION, PROVIDING VICE-PRESIDENT, "FRIEND" OF  
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RAPPORTEUR-GENERAL, AND CHAIRMAN OF WEOG WORKING GROUP  
ON INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS. US ALSO TOOK LEAD IN  
DRAFTING PROPOSALS ON FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS AROUND  
PWHICH OTHER WEO MEMBERS RALLIED, AND ON CLIMATE  
RESEARCH WHICH 15 OTHER DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING NATIONS  
CO-SPONSORED. DELEGATION ALSO ABLE TO INTRODUCE INTO  
PLAN OF ACTION AND CONFERENCE REPORT ALL MAJOR SUB-  
STANTIVE POINTS SET FORTH IN POSITION PAPERS, INCLUDING  
VIEWS ON CLIMATE, NOMADS, DEMOGRAPHIC STUDIES. POPULA-  
TION PROBLEMS, MONITORING POTENTIAL AND CAUTIONS, LAND  
MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS, AND FACT THAT ACTION AT NATIONAL  
LEVEL IS PRINCIPAL NEED. ONLY FAILURE INVOLVED FINANCIAL  
ARRANGEMENTS. US STATEMENTS ON PROPOSALS FOUND GOOD  
RECEPTIVITY BY VIRTUALLY ALL OTHER DELEGATIONS, AND  
U.S. WAS ABLE TO JOIN WITH NUMBER OF UNLIKELY  
COUNTRIES IN CO-SPONSORING VARIETY OF AMENDMENTS AND  
PROPOSALS. POTENTIAL CONTROVERSIES FAILED TO MATERIALIZE  
ON SEVERAL OCCASTIONS WHEN USEL FEARED WORSE (E.G.,  
US SOUGHT AND GAINED CHANGE TO CONFERENCE DRAFT REPORT  
WHICH IMPOED THAT COUNTRY PERMISSION WOULD BE REQUIRED  
BEFORE SATELLITE-BASED MONITORING COULD BE CARRIED OUT).

8. ROLE OF OTHER COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS: AFRICAN  
COUNTRIES WERE PREDICTABLY THE DOMINANT FORCE (WITH  
UNCOD SEC-GEN FROM EGYPT, THE PRESIDENT FROM KENYA, AN  
AFRICAN SETTING AND THE CONFERENCE TRIGGERED BY THE  
SAHELIAN DROUGHT). CROSS-SECTION OF AFRICAN STATES  
BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH OF SAHARA QUITE ACTIVE ON BOTH  
TECHNICAL AND POLITICAL FRONTS, WITH LEADERS ALGERIA,  
LIBYA, CHAD, EGYPT, KENYA, MAURITANIA, SENEGAL, TANZANIA,  
ETHIOPIA, ZAIRE, SOMALIA AND UPPER VOLTA. MIDDLE EAST  
COUNTRIES WERE EXCEPTIONALLY LOW-PROFILE, WITH OIL-  
PRODUCERS VIRTUALLY SILENT. UNCOD SEC-GEN'S INABILITY  
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TO INVOLVE THEM ACTIVELY DESPITE REPEATED TRIES IN  
PRE-CONFERENCE PERIOD ILUSTRATED BY ABSTENTIONS ON  
MATTER OF SPECIAL FINANCIAL ACCOUNT. ONLY IRAN AND  
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES PLAYED ACTIVE ROLE. ISRAEL MADE  
ONLY TWO BRIEF COMMENTS IN COMMITTEE. THE GDR WAS  
PRINCIPAL EASTERN BLOCK LEADER WITH ROMANIA ALSO VISIBLE.  
VERY LIMITED PARTICIPATION OF 16-MAN SOVIET UNION  
DELEGATION SURPRISING GIVEN EXTENSIVE PREPARATORY EFFORT.

ROLE CONFINED TO FEW SPARES TECHNICAL INTERVENTIONS  
BEYOND PREOCCUPATION WITH ADDING NEW SECTION TO ACTION  
PLAN ON INDUSTRIALIZATION AND URBANIZATION IN ARID  
ZONES. INDIA, BANGLADESH AND PAKISTAN QUITE ACTIVE IN  
THE SMALL ASIAN COUNTRY CONTINGENT, ALTHOUGH FIRST TWO  
PRINCIPALLY SEIZED WITH SHARED WATER RESOURCES PROBLEMS.  
CHINA (WITH 10-MAN POLITICAL-TECHNICAL COMBINATION)  
QUIET EXCEPT FOR 3-4 SHORT INTERVENTIONS IN COMMITTEE  
PLUS PLENARY STATEMENT. MAJOR CONCERNS SEEMED TO BE  
BOUNDARIES ON MAPS, DOCUMENT CITATIONS TO TAIWAN, AND  
IDENTIFICATION WITH INTEREST OF THIRD WORLD. LATIN  
AMERICAN COUNTRIES LED BY URUGUAY (LARGELY BECAUSE  
ITS PRINCIPAL REP WAS COMMITTEE RAPPORTEUR) WITH  
COLOMBIA AND MEXICO ALSO QUITE ACTIVE. BRAZIL AND  
ARGENTINA PREOCCUPIED WITH SHARED WATER ISSUES. CHILE  
DELEGATION LARGELY UNINVOLVED IN DEBATE, ALTHOUGH ACTIVE  
BEHIND SCENE. ONE OF THE PLUSES FOR USDEL WAS GOOD WORKING  
RELATIONSHIP WITH MEXICO DELEGATION WHICH GREW DIRECTLY  
OUT OF PRE-CONFERENCE BILATERAL MEETING IN TUCSON. THIS CLEARLY  
ENABLED COLLABORATION ON "SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS"  
SECTION OF ACTION PLAN, RESULTING IN MODERATE,  
REALISTIC AND NON-CONTROVERSIAL LANGUAGE WHICH THE  
USDEL BELIEVES WOULD NOT OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE.  
AUSTRALIA, AS CHAIRMAN OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AND OTHERS  
GROUP PALLED QUITE ACTIVE ROLE AS DID MOST ALL OTHER  
WEOG MEMBERS (ESP. FRANCE, NETHERLANDS, SWEDEN, NORWAY).  
CANADA, FRG, JAPAN, UK, AND ITALY CONCENTRATED LARGELY  
ON FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL ISSUES; AND BELGIUM ON CLIMATE.  
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THE UN AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS: THE IBRD WAS CONSPICUOUSLY  
NOT INVOLVED, AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES' ROLE WAS  
LARGELY CONFINED TO ENSURING THAT THEIR ONGOING PROGRAMS  
WERE NOTED AND NOT COMPROMISED BY ANY NEW ACTIONS  
APPROVED BY CONFERENCE. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS  
PRESENTED SEVERAL SHORT STATEMENTS BUT WERE HARDLY  
NOTICEABLE, QUITE UNLIKE WATER CONFERENCE.

LE MELLE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MEETING REPORTS, SOIL EROSION  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770329-0304  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** NAIROBI  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Litigation Codes:**  
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**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
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**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 1319082  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** UN DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE -- WRAP-UP AND OVERVIEW SUMMARY - UN DESERTIFICATION CONFERENCE (UNCOD) CONCLUDED 9:00 P.M. FRIDAY AFTER APPROVING: GL OBAL PLAN OF A  
**TAGS:** SENV, OCON, KE, UN  
**To:** STATE USUN NEW YORK  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/adf00d49-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
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